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## Brianna Vassermiller

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**Bridget Anna Vassermiller** (born November 12, 1249 - Unknown, disappeared), better known as **Brianna Vassermiller** or **The Scarlet Sorceress**, **Daerienn aep Gàidh** (The Sorceress of the Garden) by the [Aen Woedde](#) people, and **Ulaan Uur Khilen** (The Red Fury) by the [Haakgian](#) people, was a sorceress and semi-mythical figure of Ebbing folklore. She was a co-founder of the legendary group known as the Hansa of Ebbing, together with the Bear Witcher [Cervin](#). She was also a key figure in the defeat of the Haaki Invasion of 1350, alongside other figures like [Anika Marsir](#).

### Brianna Vassermiller



Brianna Vassermiller

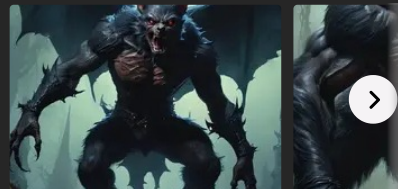
#### Biographical Information

<b>Real Name</b>	Bridget Anna Vassermiller
<b>Born</b>	12th November, 1249
<b>Birthplace</b>	Ebbing (city), <a href="#">Ebbing</a>
<b>Status</b>	Unknown
<b>Died</b>	Unknown, disappeared
<b>Service</b>	1275 - ??? (last report of her in 1358)

#### Physical Description

<b>Race</b>	Human
<b>Gender</b>	Female
<b>Hair</b>	Redhead
<b>Eyes</b>	Greyish green
<b>Skin</b>	Pale

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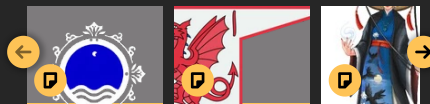
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Political Information	
Profession	Sorceress Author Gladiatrix (indirectly)
Titles	Princess of Ebbing Duchess of Neveugen Countess of the House Van Der Ermius Lady of the North (after the Haaki Invasion)
Affiliation	Hansa of Ebbing House Vassermiller Imperial Magic Academy Haakgian Royal House House Van Der Ermius Ebbing Exiles Northen Front Nefandi
Alias(es)	The Scarlet Sorceress Bri Rhena Ulaan Uur Khilen(by the Haakgian people) Daerienn aep Gàidh(by the Aen Woedde) Gynvaelbeanna Bloeddaerienn
Nationality	Ebbinger
Coat of Arms	

Relationships	
Father	King Joan Louise Vassermiller
Mother	Countess Rosalind Toricella
Sibling(s)	Thessa Vassermiller (younger sister) Wildson Vassermiller (younger brother) Cervin (brother in arms / brother figure)
Lover(s)	Anaïs (shortly before meeting Zeus) (one time lover) Zeus Burkhan Khaldun ( boyfriend ) August Van Der Ermius (domestic partner) [ According to Nilfgaardian laws ] (husband) [According to vampire customs ] Saov (one time lover) [ rumored ]
Other	Juan Pablo Vassermiller (grandfather) Roegner Vassermiller ( uncle ) Ciri (second cousin) Syanna (cousin, unknown degree) Anna Henrietta (cousin, unknown degree) Sylthana (daughter)

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## Biography

### Early life

Brianna was born in the rainy season, which would mark her for the future because of her love for this season. She started with a difficult childhood because her mother, Rosalind, never treated her well because physically she did not look

like her nor did she have the same aspirations, she was a negligent and abusive mother to the point of telling her daughter that she wished she had died in childbirth, on the other hand Joan Louise was an absent father who although he loved his children with all his heart always had in his head the responsibility of the crown, until due to war injuries he became lame and had to move to a second plane, one more of a strategist. Eventually Brianna's parents divorced, which was a scandal at court.

In her youth, Brianna was an incredibly idealistic and dreamy individual, qualities she maintained even during the most challenging moments.

## Tutelage under the Lioness of Cintra (1258 - 1262) ✦

Before becoming a mage, Brianna was the direct successor to the crown of Ebbing, so her father, Joan Louise, decided to send her to spend some time with her aunt by marriage, Calanthe. This was so that she could learn from her in case Brianna eventually ascended to power—which, as it's obvious, didn't happen, but the experience was still useful to Brianna and crucial in defining her destiny. Calanthe, albeit reluctantly, accepted her niece into the palace to learn because one of the few good things that had come from the marriage with Roegner of Ebbing (Brianna's uncle) had been getting to know Joan Louise and his children. Additionally, Calanthe thought that perhaps having [Ciri](#), who was about 6 or 5 years old at the time, interact with her older cousin would be beneficial in changing Ciri's ways. However, it didn't quite work out as planned; although Brianna and her cousin became friends and got along well, Ciri proved to be incorrigible.

Thus, Brianna spent four years under her aunt's tutelage, during which she learned many things about politics that would later prove useful as an adviser to her sister Thessa, the future queen of Ebbing. Her path to the throne would have continued had it not been for the fact that, in fact, during this time, Calanthe would convince her that if she wanted real power, she had to become a mage, as kings and queens were very limited in that sense, and that magic, with its almost "god-like" capacity of transformation could solve all the problems in her kingdom, including the most complicated one, corruption.

## Becoming a mage (1262 - 1265) ✦

This conviction led her to a resolute decision at the age of 14 when she finally returned to Ebbing for good: she was determined to eradicate the corruption plaguing the kingdom. Over the next two years, she tirelessly worked to persuade her grandfather, [Juan Pablo](#), to allow her to become a mage instead of the queen of Ebbing or a consort queen in a distant kingdom. So, when she turned 16, her persuasive efforts paid off, and her grandfather generously covered the costly tuition at the [Imperial Magic Academy](#). Although Brianna had initially harbored the desire to attend Aretuza, concerns about potential diplomatic issues with Nilfgaard led her grandfather, Juan Pablo, to guide her towards the Imperial Magic Academy instead. This decision, he believed, would provide Brianna with the tools and knowledge needed to become a wise and powerful force capable of addressing and ultimately resolving the issues that were afflicting Ebbing.

This meant that the crown eventually fell to her younger brother Wilson Vassermiller, who after realising the responsibility of carrying the weight of a crown abdicated to his younger sister, Thessa Vassermiller. Brianna became his advisor for most of his reign.

## Time at the Imperial Magic Academy of Loc Grim (1265 - 1275) ✦

*"Love and power can be a seductive dance, but sometimes the music turns sinister. I learned that the hard way at the academy."*

—Brianna to Cervin (Circa, 1280)

During her time studying at the academy, Brianna encountered individuals who would become both her friends and formidable adversaries. Among them was Anaïs, who quickly became not only her friend but also her lover. Soon after, Zeus Burkhan Khaldun entered her life, the son of the Great Khan of Haakgan (known mistakenly as Haakland among Nordlings). Zeus had been expelled from Ban Ard and sent to the empire for studies, with speculation suggesting his interest in forbidden magics as the reason for his expulsion.

Zeus's arrival marked the beginning of a romantic relationship with Brianna, initiated after an unpleasant experience with an Oferi sorceress at the academy. Their relationship endured for a decade, spanning the entirety of Brianna's academic journey. Unfortunately, what started as a promising connection deteriorated into a toxic and abusive dynamic, with Zeus subjecting Brianna to both physical and psychological torment for his own gain, eventually leading to the end of their romantic involvement and Brianna's newfound friendship with [Herna of Gemmeria](#) in the final years of her studies.

The courtship between the son of the Great Khan and the former princess of Ebbing received strong support from the Vassermiller family. They saw it as a lucrative opportunity to enhance their business and wealth by exporting Haakgan materials more affordably. This strategic move aimed to compete with Redanian merchants, particularly in the export of silk from the province of Gadny-Gür.

Amidst the complexities of her relationships and studies, Brianna, thanks to Herna of Gemmeria, gained access to the works on hemokinesis by the [Melukkan](#) sorceress Chamunda Randhawa. After years of dedicated study, this knowledge eventually led to Brianna being the consequence of the diplomatic incident of 1275 between Nilfgaard and Haakgan. As a result, she faced punishment in the form of arena combat, where she would encounter Cervin. Following these events, Brianna went on to found the Hansa of Ebbing along with the Bear Witcher, who became like a brother to her.

## The Nefandi (1273 - 1360)

*"I went in seeking knowledge, but found myself staring into the abyss. It took every ounce of discipline not to be consumed. But sometimes, the only way to fight fire is to walk through it."*

—Brianna to August reflecting on his time with the Nefandi

At some point after learning about the power of hemokinesis, Brianna met Orlevi Aep Llwanwoch, a mage belonging to the secret mage organization of Chasm Magic scholars known as the [Nefandi](#), who took a keen interest in her due to her perceived "potential." He convinced her to join the organization, and there she began studying ancestral objects related to the Goetia. For some reason, she ended up meeting the demon god, [Yrrheded](#), with whom she made a deal: the demon god would seek revenge against those who banished him, and in return, she would gain the power to save Ebbing.

Ironically, her deal with the demon god allowed her to write the book known as "Artes prohibitaе," an extensive treatise on [Chasm Magic](#), its various types, their effects and consequences, and the reasons not to practice them. All of this was presented from a close and familiar perspective rather than an authoritative and prohibitive one. Later, due to its popularity, it would be cited in the multivolume treatise known as "[Ars Magica](#)" in its 60th edition.

During her time in the organization, upon realizing the nefarious plans that the Nefandi had for the world, she decided to remain within the organization and destroy it from within. This goal she would achieve almost entirely, with the exception of one member, Mimit Sova, who survived to attempt experiments on creating a vessel to harness the power of the [Cosmic Horror](#) known as [Dagon](#). All

of this was thanks to the help of the School of the Cat Witcheress (although not completely mutated), [Tubiel of Brenna](#), who had discovered the Nefandi conspiracy in 1275.

Brianna, without the knowledge of the Hansa to avoid endangering them (with the exception of August), and Tubiel collaborated for five years to put an end to the organization. Unfortunately, Tubiel wouldn't live to see the organization's demise, as she died in 1280. The organization was definitively destroyed many years later by Tubiel's adoptive sister, [Jolanta Dinmarb](#), who killed Mimit in the year 1360. By then, Brianna was the only "member" still alive.

## Ebbing confederation insurrection (1265)

News of the insurrection eventually reached Brianna's ears, profoundly affecting her due to the loss of her grandfather, who, as the king of Ebbing, was one of the commanders of the insurrectionary army, along with other figures such as duke [Rudiger](#) from Maecht. This, combined with the unmistakable pro-imperial atmosphere at the Loc Grim academy, subjected her to enduring bullying for a while. Herna of Gemmeria seized this opportunity to get close to her and attempt to corrupt her, with the goal of gaining access to the top echelons of power in Ebbing and replacing her to carry out a coup d'état, especially since Ebbing was entering a transitional period after the death of Juan Pablo. Herna believed that mages should govern rather than serve as counselors, and she was willing to make this idea a reality. Although this scenario never materialized, it inspired the mixed sorceress to aspire to more.

The closeness between the two sorceresses, while not evolving into a friendship, did result in them becoming relatively close figures. They corresponded and kept in touch through a megascope for a time. Ironically, this connection would have a positive influence on Brianna in the long run. During this period, Brianna also formed close bonds with different mages from Geso and Maecht, who, like her, began to suffer bullying because of the failed insurrection.

## Diplomatic incident (1275)

*"My actions were fueled by righteous anger, but they were a lapse in judgement. I am prepared to face the consequences, but know this: I will not apologize for defending the honor of my family and my kingdom, Emhyr."*

—Brianna shortly before being sent to the arena

Due to her position among the Imperial aristocracy, Brianna could have assumed roles such as her sister Thessa's advisor and the head of the Ebbing Merchants Guild directly after her graduation. However, during this time, due to her newfound status, she instead sought a future husband for her younger sister to create an alliance that would benefit Ebbing as much as possible. Brianna's relationship with one of the sons of the Great Khan propelled her to the top, allowing her to hobnob with the Emperor and his closest associates. Because of this, she tried to arrange possible marriages with foreign monarchs for her sister.

She attempted to arrange a union with [Zerrikania](#), but after the fall of the [School of the Manticore](#) and thus the failed attempt at marriage between the prince of Zerrikania and the princess of Metinna, coupled with the dictatorial status that the country had under the reign of the sorceress queen [Merineaeveth](#), prevented it. She also attempted to arrange a marriage for her sister with a monarch from the region where Zeus was from, but the expansionist plans of the future Great Khan to conquer territories such as Qunlun, once he ascended to power after his father's death, prevented her from doing so.

So, during a diplomatic council between representatives of Nilfgaard and what the Nordlings and Nilfgaardians knew as Haakland, the sorceress found Zeus Burkhan Khaldun with a lover from [Ofir](#), Dayo, one of the concubines gifted by Nibras during Zeus visit to the country in 1274. The woman entered a state of maximum anxiety and rage. Brianna wounded them both to the point of leaving

Zeus with a permanent limp and his lover with a scar on her face. As a result, she was charged with the death penalty. However, [Emhyr](#), aiming to avoid another insurrection due to the state of the Nilfgaardian army after the Third Northern War and the problems he faced in the Imperial Court, offered her the punishment of becoming a fighter in the reconstructed arena of Claremont. It was there that she met Cervin, and shortly afterward, they founded the Hansa of Ebbing.

## The Nilfgaardian Arena ✦

*"Not the place I ever imagined finding a friend, let alone a brother. But Cervin, gruff as he was, had a good heart under that rough exterior."*

—Brianna to Aëte

Unlike Cervin, who, due to his mutant status and being sold as a slave, spent a month fighting for his life in the arena, Brianna was thrust straight into being an employed gladiatrix in the final of that year's Imperial Gladiator Tournament, held in Ebbing as a way for Emhyr to punish Brianna for having destroyed the diplomatic relations between Nilfgaard and Haakland, and to remind her that Ebbing, de facto, was not as independent as she would like it to be. Bought by the Aep Brelchlohn family, she was to be used to support its major asset, namely Cervin, and thus win the tournament. During the journey from Skellige to Ebbing, Cervin had tried to escape but failed. Ironically, this failure benefited him in the long run as he met Brianna.

The relationship at the beginning between Brianna and Cervin was, we could say, rough, to say the least. Neither difficult nor easy. This was primarily due to Cervin, who, due to his upbringing as a [School of the Bear](#) Witcher, lacked the necessary social skills, fitting the Nordling stereotype of an outcast and pariah of witchers, and especially the stereotypes associated with his [witcher school](#). Additionally, due to the betrayal he had suffered, he was mistrustful of sorceresses. However, as they fight together in the arena, they grew increasingly close, to the point that, over time, they came to consider each other as siblings.

In the arena, they participated in a spectacle that combined not only fights against other [gladiators](#), some of them very well known, such as Kullo and Verusio, but also naval battles, fights against monsters, such as [vigilosaurs](#), and battles on difficult terrain, like marshlands. All of this was made possible with the help of sorcerers who overcame the technical difficulties. Given that it was not only the final but also featured the presence of important figures such as the Emperor himself, it became a grand spectacle. They ultimately emerged victorious, winning the 100th annual Nilfgaardian gladiatorial tournament and taking the title of champions, securing their freedom with the prizes awarded.

Two statues were built in their honor. However, over time, Cervin's statue was lost, and only Brianna's statue was found during excavations in the distant year of 1850.

## Traveling with Cervin ✦

Once they got their freedom, Cervin and Brianna, despite getting along quite well, were on the verge of parting ways. Mostly because Cervin wanted to continue his solitary life as a witcher and not "bother" the sorceress. But the loss of his swords, which had been sold by the Aep Brelchlohn to pay for Cervin's registration for the Imperial Gladiator Tournament, prevented him from doing so. Cervin lacked the money or the contacts to order swords as unique as his lost witcher's swords. Brianna, on the other hand, did not, and after the sorceress offered to help him get new ones, and he reluctantly accepted her help, they began to travel together.

Their first joint endeavor was to procure a silver sword for Cervin, a task that proved challenging during visits to various blacksmiths, as none of them managed to convince the Bear Witcher. It was only upon reaching Ebbing capital that their fortunes changed. There, they encountered a [hawmin](#) master

blacksmith named Euquerio Stromholz, who successfully persuaded Cervin after seeing his work in the Annual Ebbing Blacksmiths Tournament. Euquerio offered not only to craft the silver sword but also to fashion an armor set and a steel sword if they helped him obtain the necessary materials. Since the blacksmith's caravan had fallen victim to bandit attacks during its journey to the capital, leaving Euquerio as the sole survivor but without anything to work on, Brianna and Cervin agreed to assist with his problem. They swiftly resolved the issue by killing the bandits and gathering the required materials. After their return, Euquerio, true to his word and after a few days (that Brianna took to visit her family), presented Cervin with what would become his iconic sword, the "Reach of the Damned," an elven steel sword, and the "Armor of a Thousand Flowers," crafted from Dol Blathanna diagrams recovered from the assaulted caravan. It was a significant act, the first of many that the Hansa of Ebbing (even before its official establishment) would do for the kingdom. Thus, embarking on their journey to become the semi-mythical figures that they would be.

## Creating the Hansa of Ebbing (1275 - 1276) ✦

There are many versions of how the Hansa of Ebbing came about and how it became part of the collective mind of the people, not only in [Ebbing](#) (which was the region where they helped people the most) but also in surrounding regions such as [Metinna](#), [Nazair](#), and [Maecht](#). However, their exploits also reached the duchies of [Toussaint](#) and [Vinland](#), and if the latest legends are true, as far as [Barsa](#) and the [Far South](#) region of [Skepimos](#) (however, unlike the renowned [Golden Griffin](#) and the mage and explorer Finn Thordvison, no one was able to verify their presence there). The only thing the different tales agree on is the order in which the members joined.

## The Duke of Neveugen ✦

Brianna and Cervin were the first, followed by [August](#), a [Higher Vampire](#) belonging to the [Ammurun](#) tribe, who was exiled to the [Old Continent](#) along with his family, and later in his life became the duke of the region of Neveugen (not to be confused with [Dominik Bombastus Houvenaghel](#), who became mayor of the city of the same name in 1301). Subordinate to the Vassermiller family, he held territories near the border with Maecht, dedicated to protecting it so that the small skirmishes that arose between this province of Metinna and Ebbing did not escalate.

The story of August is complicated and extensive. Although he was young by vampiric standards, he had lived a lot. If we go far back in time, there are sources that even depict him as a mercenary participant in the wars that Nilfgaard waged against the various taifas of the [Barsa](#) region during its first expansion, and the so-called Reconquest which aimed to reclaim what once belonged to the empire of Nilfgaard's ancestors, the [Aen Nilfe](#). Some say that he even governed one of these Barsamen kingdoms quite efficiently until, after the war, the taifa was completely incorporated, and its government was completely ceded to the then republic. In a nutshell, he spent most of his years travelling from Kovir as far away as Eastern Barsa (in fact, the maps that the Nilfgaardians have of the region of Barsa were made by him with such precision that they only need in the future minor adjustments), exercising various trades until he finally made Ebbing his home. Despite being a corrupt place, August loved that kingdom with all his soul and ended up forging a dukedom and forging an alliance with the [Van Moorlehem](#) (whom August himself would call "cousins" to feel a little less lonely).

August spent his younger years with his clan until he fell in love for the first time with a Higher Vampire. Those tender years of vampiric "childhood" started to become hell as the vampire demanded blood every day, a prospect August did not relish. Finally, that relationship ended in a two-year-long fight, during which August had to regenerate his heart, as the vampire had ripped it out along with part of his inner organs. This, combined with his unsuccessful defense alongside his family of the vrans of the Western Continent (since they believed that both could coexist), attempting to avoid the genocide that the vampires perpetrated

against the lizardmen (resulting in his and his family's condemnation to exile by the rest of the Ammurun), led him to make the decision to cross the Great Sea and travel to the Old Continent searching for a new life far from his tribe.

August was a rather humanitarian figure among vampires—humanitarian in an authentic sense, unlike the case of [Orianna](#), for example. This had earned him exile along with his family (and it would take several centuries before it was finally discovered by humans) from the [Western Continent](#). Similar to figures like [Regis](#) or Mikhail (better known as Saint Michael by the people of Cidarís), he believed that the role of higher vampires was not to remain indifferent to humanity and other sentient races, nor to use them solely as cattle. Instead, he believed in helping and occasionally guiding them (in that sense, he was less paternalistic than Mikhail).

Brianna and Cervin would meet August in 1275 in the library of Neveugen's capital after he returned to the duchy from helping in [Beauclair](#) during [the Night of the Long Fangs](#). Regis had called upon him since they both knew each other to defend the humans of Beauclair from the vampires commanded by Dettlaff. As a plan B, knowing the natural charisma that August possessed despite being a *tiesvl eslešat* (a dishonored one, translated from the vampire language, an "outcast" who had not regained his status, so to speak), he was also called to attempt to convince Orianna in case the initial plan to find [Syanna](#) failed for some reason.

Brianna and Cervin were present in the library because they were researching the second coming of the [Catriona plague](#) after both had spent a season dealing with an excess of [Plague Maidens](#). It would be there where the paths of the three would cross. August would kindly offer them his help and knowledge, for in his long life (by 1275, he was approximately 275 years old, having been born at the beginning of the 10th century and being very young when he came to the Old Continent), he had exercised multiple professions. From a mercenary to a ruler, philosopher, and even a cartographer (helping figures such as Markus Hohlenberg and the aforementioned Finn Thordvison in their exploration and mapping work), among many other professions.

Cervin, like with Brianna initially during their time in the arena, did not trust August. In this case, he thought August was "too good a person" to be a nobleman. However, due to how well Brianna and August got along, Cervin reluctantly let go of his suspicions and accepted August into the group, although he remained suspicious of August's intentions to cure the people of Neveugen. Initially, his skepticism was rooted in Ebbing's endemic corruption, but later, he began to suspect August might be a monster, specifically a vampire (a suspicion that would prove correct), who wanted to use the people as a stock, although it would take time to confirm.

That night also marked the first occasion when August felt the need to call Brianna "Rhena," a nickname once carried by a certain distant relative of hers. The vampire would later resignify and affectionately give her this nickname in the future, unaware at the time that she was the true heir to the throne of Ebbing.

The confirmation for Cervin would come once the plague problem was (at least until Keira's cure, which would take years to come) alleviated, when August invited them to lunch at his palace on a sunny late summer day that year, and Cervin, returning from the latrines, noticed that August had no shade, which became the last confirmation he needed, drawing the silver sword and putting it around August's neck before sitting down at the table with lunch already set.

Cervin's eyes narrowed, fixated on August, waiting for an explanation. The vampire, unfazed, calmly began to recount part of his life story, revealing the intricacies of his journey and the struggles he faced. As the conversation unfolded, Cervin couldn't help but feel a growing sense of understanding and

empathy towards the Higher Vampire, realizing that appearances could be deceiving, even when it came to creatures of the night.

The lunch became a pivotal moment in their relationship. August's sincerity and the depth of his experiences gradually thawed Cervin's distrust. After that, much like in the case of another white-haired witcher and a vampire, they became good friends.

He was an intelligent man, more for his age than for his academic experiences (which as already mentioned, he also had), his clan, the Ammurun drank little human blood as there was a shortage of humans on the continent where they lived having to consume vran blood, which, compared to human blood, was worse and more difficult to obtain, which ended in the aforementioned genocide that August tried to stop, when the vampires got fed up with the vran civilization that the future Nordling colonists of [Fabiola](#) would nickname "The Valley of the Ancient Reptiles". August may have looked like a weak and easily killed superior vampire, but he was fifteenth in the line of succession in the vampire hierarchy.

August used to dress in dark brown leather trousers, boots, a shirt and a black coat, giving him the look of an adventurer. In his human form, his hair was slightly long and he adorns his face with gold-rimmed glasses that give him a more human look, or so he thought. If he could have chosen a trade for all his life without gettin bored, August would have chosen to be a cartographer or historian as he loved maps, laws and the ancient history of the places he visited.

He had a [standard Koviri accent](#) which he acquired during the time he spent in the kingdom, although over the years he managed to soften it a bit too much and had almost adopted the standard Ebbinger accent.

Eventually, August and Brianna would fell in love, and would get married. With a marriage that will last thirty-six years (wedding which, depending on the Hansa story, would be more people or less. With some tales, saying that even, the [Lady of Time and Space](#), was present at the wedding) What is known for sure, is that if not all members of the Hansa, the majority of them were present at the ceremony. Their marriage could have lasted longer, but unfortunately, August was notified of a civil war among his people and was compelled to return, with the hope, that he could help change things, and make his vampire culture better than in the past.

## The Wood Elf ✨

Soon after, Aëte, an [Aen Woedde](#) elf (though they called themselves Aen Mait, "The Free People"), would join the group. This occurred when Brianna, Cervin, and August, traveling through the interior of Ebbing, were mistakenly assaulted by a group of Aen Woedde led by the aforementioned Aëte. Feeling cornered as they were pursued by mercenaries hired by the corrupt elite of Ebbing, who believed them to be possessors of mythical riches such as the philosopher's stone, they decided to go on the offensive, despite their more peaceful nature compared to their [Aen Seidhe](#) cousins by that time.

Aëte was born in one of the boggy forests of Ebbing. She was a warrior, her favorite weapons being a bow and arrows, followed by a pair of daggers hidden in her boots. Her daggers were relics from a time when the Aen Níffe and Aen Woedde didn't split into two cultures due to the question of slavery. She always wore baggy clothes so that she could be mistaken for a man, hiding her chest. She covered her head and ears with a hooded cloak of a beautiful leaf-green color.

It is also said that, physically, she could sometimes be mistaken for an [Aen Manche](#). Exposed to the sun, it was said that she acquired a tanned skin, which contrasted with her blonde hair and made her look like one of this exiled group of elves.

Fortunately, they were saved thanks to Brianna, who had known the elf since her teenage years when they became best friends after getting lost in the woods while she was going to relieve herself. This incident occurred during a visit to [Cintra](#) when the Ebbing Royal Crown carriage suffered an accident, and they had to change the wheel. It was during this period that Brianna met Aête, and they formed a strong bond, since Aête helped Brianna return to her family. After that, they never lost contact, and in fact, during her time at court, Brianna became a notable defender of the elves, actively opposing the more Nordling-minded factions within the aristocracy of Ebbing who sought to subject them to a pogrom, like the Great Cleansing that had occurred in [Aedirn](#) many years prior.

However, despite the pleasant encounter, Aête would not immediately join the Hansa. It would only be after they had dealt with the issue plaguing her people that she would join the group. To achieve this, the Hansa split into two, with one group, consisting of August and Brianna, handling the more political aspect of the matter, and the other, comprised of Cervin and Aête, taking care of the more violent side. It was in this way that Cervin, despite his reserved nature, formed a friendship with Aête, who managed to strike up a conversation and grow close to him. As an interesting note, due to his partly elven heritage, Aête initially mistook him for a witcher of the [School of the Cat](#), for whom she had some appreciation, having helped in the past with bandit issues in Ebbing affecting both human and elven populations. It wasn't until Cervin demonstrated his bear-style combat that Aête realized she was mistaken.

She was very fond of music but couldn't play any instruments, so she often spent her free time drawing with Brianna or listening to Cervin's songs (since the Bear had a short musical talent besides his hard Bear Witcher upbringing). Her hair was so blonde that it looked white but shone like the sun, and her eyes were a dark honey color. She wore hardly any makeup, yet she was a beautiful woman. In time, she would become the leader of the village where most of the Aen Woedde people in Ebbing resided (since they were in all Nilfgaardian forests) because, as the Heroine of Ebbing, she had protected that place and that village countless times.

After Cervin and Aête finished with the problem of the mercenaries, they would meet again with August and Brianna at the same point where they had been mistakenly assaulted, to be informed that, at least on the political side, the issue was not solved. The elites who had hired the mercenaries had fled to Nazair, waiting for all the elves to be killed so that the crown of Ebbing could not retaliate against them, as there would not be enough evidence to link them.

And that would be how Aête would join the Hansa, supposedly temporarily, but finally staying. The Hansa then, would set course to Nazair, where they would put an end to the problem once and for all, and also, they would meet the next member to join.

### The Seductress

The tale of how Coshunee (or Nee for the members of the Hansa) joined the Hansa of Ebbing is amusing, at least in most versions of the later group myth. The most popular one recounts that once the group reached the shores of [Nazair](#), specifically its new capital, Nova Assengard (or Assengard Ur in Nilfgaardian), and dispelled the corrupt elites of Ebbing who had sought refuge there after gathering more evidence and reporting them to the governor of the province. In return, they received a generous reward (since killing elves who had done nothing was punishable by law, unlike in the Northern Realms). They decided to stay for a while, each for different reasons—Aête contemplating what useful items she could buy for her people, Brianna dealing with matters related to the fall of the Nefandi, August checking on Regis's emotional state (who, after Detlaff's death, had spent some time with a close friend and had gone to Nazair to take care of the vampire's affairs, including Detlaff's home and Toy Shop), and Cervin, being a witcher, looking for some work, which he would find.

This is how **Pellgled Arth** (an affectionate nickname Aête had given to Cervin, "Bear of the Far North," as his hair, along with his witcher school, reminded her of the **Far North** bears' skins that occasionally reached Ebbing through trade) would come across Coshunee after one of the messengers of the provincial governor found him and called him to the palace. There, the governor explained to him that there was a succubus in the city causing trouble. The succubus had been seducing all the men and women in the region for some time, and no one had been able to stop her, and now she was in the capital.

Cervin accepted the job, though charging the governor a high fee because dealing with sentient beings was always a nuisance for him. It wasn't as simple as going, killing the monster, and collecting the reward, especially with a succubus. There were too many factors involved, such as listening to the "monster's" side of the story.

So, Cervin got down to work and started investigating. It was a tedious and boring task, mainly because he had to interrogate many affected individuals, both men and women. He also realized that he couldn't kill Coshunee since the succubus hadn't killed anyone. Had she broken marriages and relationships? Yes, many, but she hadn't killed anyone. Thus, he didn't have justification to draw his silver sword and simply end her, as a **ranger** from the Northern Realms would do with any non-human. Cervin decided to continue investigating.

After several interrogations, he realized that she belonged to the subspecies of succubi that lacked goat legs, and therefore, she could blend more easily into society. This made the job more challenging but interesting at the same time.

Therefore, Cervin continued his investigation with determination until he finally found her, and the amusing part of the whole story began. Once located, Cervin, opting for a more diplomatic approach, warned her that she had to stop, or she would get into trouble. However, Coshunee paid no heed, finding amusement in Cervin's "paternalistic" attitude, which, coupled with his exotic appearance, led her to attempt to seduce him, as she had done with many other men and women.

Despite Cervin's mutant physiology and, consequently, heightened libido, he resisted Coshunee's charms. He ignored his body's reactions, maintaining a cold demeanor. Ironically, this only fueled the succubus's infatuation with him and started a story of intriguing interactions between the two.

Cervin remained steadfast, even as Coshunee persistently tested his resolve with her beguiling wiles. The succubus, intrigued by the unusual challenge presented by the stoic witcher, found herself drawn to him in more ways than one. The dance between them became a delicate interplay of words, desires, and a mutual curiosity that neither had anticipated.

As Cervin delved deeper into the succubus's background, he discovered a complex tale of her struggles and challenges. Coshunee, it seemed, was not merely a malicious seductress but a being caught between the expectations of her kind and a desire for a different existence. The stories she shared with Cervin painted a picture of a misunderstood creature navigating a world that perceived her as nothing more than a threat.

Intrigued by the nuances of her story, Cervin, like with August back in the day, began to see beyond the stereotype of a monster. He realized that the succubus was not inherently malevolent but rather a product of her own circumstances. This revelation added a layer of complexity to his task, as he grappled with the moral dilemma of fulfilling the governor's request to eliminate Coshunee.

The witcher's encounters with Coshunee became a series of conversations that extended beyond the mere professional exchange of information. They discussed morality, the nature of monsters, and the intricacies of coexistence in a world

divided by prejudice. Cervin found himself questioning the predetermined judgments he had carried into the investigation.

Despite the mutual understanding that developed between them, the situation remained fraught with tension. Coshunee, while appreciating Cervin's unique perspective, continued her seductive attempts, fascinated by the challenge of breaking through the emotional barriers of a witcher. Cervin, in turn, maintained his focus on finding a resolution that would satisfy both the governor's concerns and his own evolving sense of justice.

Feeling powerless and unsure of what to do, Cervin turned to the help of the makeshift family he had unintentionally formed. Seeking their assistance to resolve the succubus problem, Brianna, followed by August, and finally Aëte, joined Cervin's contract, attempting to aid the witcher in solving the succubus issue and, consequently, getting to know Coshunee.

Together, the problem was resolved as the perspectives of the other members led to a solution that would not only benefit the succubus but also prevent the inhabitants of Nova Assengard from suffering further due to the harm caused unknowingly by the succubus. Thus, they chose to stage her death by cutting off one of her horns. Cervin delivered the severed horn to the governor, accompanied by August, as evidence of her supposed demise, with August helping Cervin to convince the governor of the succubus's faked death. After that, they decided to take her with them until they found a place where she could thrive peacefully without causing harm to anyone. Interestingly, they didn't find it, at least not in a physical sense for a long time, as, like Aëte, the succubus soon became another member of the Hansa of Ebbing.

Her hair was as red as fire and glowed with an unearthly intensity; her eyes were emerald green unless she used her powers, at which point they turned amber. She normally wore an amulet given to her by Brianna that made her look human, but when he removed the amulet, you could see one of her horns, as she never recovered the lost one.

Depending on the myth, it is said that Coshunee eventually managed to seduce Cervin on a few occasions. However, this was probably more of an embellishment by the bards than anything else. For there would be a future member of the Hansa who would truly capture the heart of the seemingly cold Bear Witcher.

She died at the hands of the former [School of the Viper](#) Witcher, [Vonir](#), because he thought she was evil and was going to wreak havoc for [Dun Dare](#). That happened in the year 1291; her friends only found Coshunee's corpse in the cave where the succubus would eventually lived. Vonir would die one year later.

## The Bard

The last to join the Hansa of Ebbing was Elia aep Bullogh, a bard from Fano, who joined the group in 1276 during their journey to [Vinland](#) (later in the article). The journey of the Hansa to that distant duchy was partially motivated by political questions, as one of Brianna's brothers was about to be married to one of the daughters of one of the two dukes of the diarchy of Vinland. Thus, the Hansa accompanied Brianna. Specifically, Elia joined in Kaedwen after she recognized the diplomatic caravan of her kingdom, and with her bardic charisma, convinced Thessa as well as Brianna to join as entertainment. She was killed by [Erzsébet Bathory](#), the so-called "Red Duchess of Vinland", and became one of her last victims. It is said that her work was preserved thanks to August, who sent copies of her compositions and lyrics to the Imperial Archives in Nilfgaard.

An accurate physical description of Elia aep Bullogh was provided by [Putnam Pitch](#) during several interviews he had with various historians after retiring as a grandmaster from the [School of the Crane](#) (due to being one of the oldest known persons, only behind [Adalwulf of Aedirn](#) and some sorcerers). Pitch met her in

1275, which allowed for the creation of songs as well known as "The Eagle and the Cat" (a ballad about the romance of Putnam and Tubiel).

Other notable works included "The Blue Bear" (a song about Cervin), which served as one of the most reliable descriptions of the semi-legendary mutant. This was followed by the works of the poet Eurico de Jugo, also a chronicler of Brianna's Sister's reign, such as "All That Glitters Is Not Gold" (a ballad about Aëte), and "They Won't Move Us" (a children's song about some kids who refused to get off a fishing boat in Ebbing), which became extremely popular. Due to numerous versions, "They Won't Move Us" was considered anonymous for a long time.

### Other notable but lesser-known members ✧

Based on the ballads, some temporary members included [Runa](#) (although it is said that she was more attached to Cervin and was also rumored to be a member of the mythical [Grigori](#) species), Saov (a Scoia'tael elf whom Cervin met some time ago while saving him, and with whom Brianna is rumored to have had an affair), and Svetlana (a sorceress said to have learned the ability to stand between the world of the living and the dead, though this ability remains legendary and lacks definitive records). The histories that have endured over time do not agree on whether Svetlana was associated solely with the Hansa of Ebbing, only with Cervin, or with both.

And finally, Ekkeg, a rare Coral Troll turned slave, was brought by Zangvebarian traders accompanied by his pet wombat to serve as cheap labor in the Nilfgaardian mines and as a curiosity for exhibition. The stories tell that everyone in the Hansa adopted him and cared for him as if he were their little brother until he eventually became a legendary trader, alongside his exotic pet. He managed to recover the color of the corals he carried on his back. For many years, his existence was denied until the bones of his pet were found in the ruins of Brianna's tower.

### Notable adventures with the Hansa ✧

#### The Red Duchess of Vinland (1276) ✧

*"Let the truth be buried with that monster. Lestec deserves peace, and the good name of Vinland must be preserved."*

—Brianna after the duchess' death

The first adventure of the Hansa of Ebbing as such would take place in the duchy of [Vinland](#), one of the few "civilized" lands in what the Nordlings call the [Far North](#). All of this happened when, as most tales say, August received a letter from one of the dukes who ruled the diarchy, Lestec, whom August had saved when Lestec was just a boy, from being murdered. Lestec asked for help because a series of murders were happening at the court, and no one knew who was behind them. Also, Lestec couldn't accuse the other duke without evidence, as that could lead to a civil war after the recent tensions they had experienced. August was about to leave alone, but his intuition told him at the last moment not to, and that it would be better to discuss it with the Hansa to have support in case things went wrong for any reason, especially with a sorceress and a witcher as allies. So August mentioned it to the rest of the Hansa, and they accepted, although Cervin was somewhat reluctant due to his dislike of the cold from his time in the chilly Bear Keep.

And after a few days of organizing and using a diplomatic journey of the Ebinger Crown to Vinland as a cover, the Hansa traveled in a cart to the cold duchy.

Once in the duchy, the Hansa met with Lestec, who offered them to stay at the royal palace with all expenses covered. Before long, they got to work, dividing into teams. August, Cervin, and Aëte, skilled trackers, focused on investigating the palace for clues, while Brianna, Elia, and Coshunee, more adept at understanding court matters, tried to conduct subtle interrogations.

For two weeks, they didn't achieve much except suspecting the Duchess [Erzsébet Bathory](#), the second wife of Lestec, whom they only saw in the late afternoon or evening. However, they managed to annoy the killer, who eventually made a misstep after those two weeks of the foreigners' visit, revealing herself by inviting Elia to a private concert intending to murder her and drink her blood, eventually resulting in Elia's death. After the bard's death, the Hansa discovered that Erzsébet was none other than a nosferat, periodically killing victims to drink their blood. She had worked her way into nobility in Vinland, becoming Lestec's second wife after the first one died in childbirth.

The ensuing confrontation was fierce, and Aëte, Brianna, and Coshunee almost lost their lives in the process. However, a spell from Brianna, combined with an arrow from Coshunee, weakened the nosferat enough in her vampiric form for August and Cervin to end her life in a combined attack. Despite her heinous crimes, the truth about her species as a nosferat was kept a secret to save face for Duke Lestec. Instead, she was painted as a psychopathic human with an obsession for young women and their blood. The story of her vampiric nature and her demise at the hands of the Hansa of Ebbing circulated in gossip circles and later became part of legends and myths. Her cover story claimed she was taken to trial, found guilty, and locked up in a bricked-up room, where she died a few days later. After that, the Hansa returned to Ebbing for a few years after their next big adventure happened in 1280.

### The Barsa Affair (1280)

*"August and his fancy talk. Sometimes I wonder if it actually works."*

—Cervin to Brianna during their time in Barsa

After the events in Vinland, as previously mentioned, Brianna and the Hansa stayed in Ebbing for a few years, precisely four. These years served to strengthen the bond of the found family even more, with everyone living in August's palace in Neveugen (except for Brianna, who, despite trying to be present, was often absent due to her duties in the Ebbing court and her secret work with August and Tubiel to destroy the Nefandi). During this period, there were some stories, more like anecdotes than a significant narrative, until the year 1280.

In 1280, a significant story unfolded due to the high number of deaths among Nilfgaardian settlers in Ebbing. This prompted Emhyr (who died in 1290) to send forces to Ebbing to "pacify" them if they continued killing Nilfgaardians. Brianna, fearing that Ebbing would lose its remaining independence and face a massacre if the emperor still believed that the Ebbinger locals were responsible, took action as her sister's advisor and protector of Ebbing. She initiated an investigation with the help of the entire Hansa.

This investigation led them to [Barsa](#), specifically to Marad in Western Barsa, once part of the Taifa of Tarim and the [Southern Kingdoms](#). In Barsa, they discovered that these murders were carried out by Barsamen militias who had infiltrated Ebbing as traders seeking revenge for the abuses committed by the Nilfgaardian forces (specifically Ebbinger mercenaries) in the Ofir/Hannu-backed lands of the Barsamen during the last conflict in the region.

After spending time there and assessing the situation, the Hansa ensured that justice was served to the murderers. August, using his diplomatic skills and contacts, promised that justice would also be served for the abuses committed by the Nilfgaardians. This led to an extensive investigation, during which August disappeared for a while upon returning to Ebbing. However, justice was eventually achieved. August also attempted to unite Barsa under two separate states to foster peace, but his efforts failed, and conflicts in the region persisted from time to time. Nevertheless, he managed to bring some justice to both sides and, in his way, prevented further innocent lives from being massacred for a while. As a fun anecdote, Brianna acquired various rugs from an Ofieri merchant during the journey, which Cervin would despise for the rest of his days.

## The Price for Life (1285) ✧

*"We saved countless lives, but Aëte's absence cuts deep."*

—Brianna to the Hansa during their return to Ebbing

The next great adventure for the Hansa would take them far from Ebbing. The events began a couple of years earlier, in 1283, when a plague of nightmares began afflicting the nobility of Ebbing, eventually spreading to other territories of Nilfgaard. However, it wasn't until 1285, when the nightmare plague further escalated and even affected Brianna's sister, queen Thessa, that the Hansa decided to leave the kingdom. Until then, Thessa had been using the plague to cleanse the systemic corruption in Ebbing.

Under orders from the imperial authorities who were aware of their exploits, the Hansa began an investigation. Similar to the one in 1280, this investigation once again took them far from Ebbing and Nilfgaard.

Specifically, it led them to the [Far South](#), to the land of [Skepimos](#), to the kingdom of Karaciya, where they uncovered the origin of the curse. It was revealed to be a curse placed by the mage king of Karaciya after his daughter was raped by an Ebbinger mage during her studies in the Nilfgaardian Empire. Enraged by this, he casted a curse that would plunge all of Nilfgaard into an eternal nightmare as retribution for his daughter's humiliation. This curse spreaded like a disease.

The Hansa attempted to negotiate with the mage king. However, the results were not favorable, forcing them to stay in that distant land for a couple of months. The king demanded a terrible sacrifice in exchange for the cure: an Ebbinger life for his daughter's pain. Unwilling to condemn an innocent, the Hansa faced a difficult decision. They could either defy the king and risk permanent war with Karaciya or offer one of their own in exchange for the cure.

August then offered to be the sacrifice (as his Higher Vampire abilities would allow him to regenerate even after being supposedly killed). However, Aëte intervened. Adhering to the principle of "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth," she decided to sacrifice herself to save not only Ebbing from the curse but all of Nilfgaard, including her own people, the Aen Woedde elves, as some of the Aen Woedde leaders had also fallen victim to the curse. The group tried to convince Aëte not to do it, that they would find another solution; however, Aëte did not change her mind. Time was against them, and if her sacrifice would prevent thousands of people from dying of starvation trapped in a nightmare, she would be willing to make it. And so it was, Aëte sacrificed herself, and as promised by the mage king, the curse was lifted, and people woke up again. However, Aëte's death marked the gradual beginning of the end for this group that had saved Ebbing many times, as well as the beginning, of the more melancholic personality that Brianna would have in the distant future.

## The slow collapse of the Hansa of Ebbing ✧

### First Brianna's suicide attempt (1290) ✧

After Aëte's death, the initial symptoms of Brianna's future depression began to manifest, albeit mildly, due to August's continued presence. In 1290, Brianna attempted her first suicide when she ventured into the Ebbing swamps, claiming to Cervin that she was going to defeat a hydra living there. She explained that Cervin's silver sword had just been repaired, and she didn't want it ruined by a mere [hydra](#). The reality was much sadder, as Brianna actually wanted the monster to devour her. However, Cervin managed to track her in time and prevent the act by confronting and defeating the monster, for which, in fact, the Bear Witcher would collect a generous reward.

However, Cervin did not believe Brianna's lie, and worried, he would give almost all of the money to August so that August could take Brianna to see a Pereplut

confessor to help her. Sadly, her time with the confessor didn't help much, only delaying Brianna's strong depression, which seemed inevitable.

### Death of Coshunee (1291)

The next tragedy that devastated the group, leading to their first long-term separation, was the death of Coshunee. It occurred in 1291 when the Hansa finally found a home for Coshunee, specifically in the village of Dun Dâre, where she seemed to be thriving and was not harming anyone. Her time with the Hansa had taught her how to fully integrate with other races, effectively becoming the "succubus of the village," living in a nearby cave and helping young boys become more confident as they reached the age to engage in intimate activities.

She was doing well until new inhabitants arrived in the village who did not view her favorably. They saw an opportunity to get rid of her in 1291 when the School of the Viper Witcher and private detective Vonir passed through the village. These inhabitants hired Vonir, fabricating stories against Coshunee and convincing Vonir that she was evil and would bring harm to Dun Dâre. This led him to kill her, even after hearing her side of the story, believing that Coshunee was only lying to protect herself. Later that same year, during what they thought was a routine visit to Coshunee, the Hansa discovered her lifeless body in the cave where the succubus lived.

This tragedy caused a split and a long-term separation within the group, with Cervin going one way and Brianna and August going the other. Brianna attempted to stop August from seeking vengeance for her friend, who, for the first time in a long time, was furious. However, Cervin was determined to seek revenge and eventually found the culprit after months of tracking him down in [Novigrad](#). There, Cervin confronted Vonir in his detective office, and their confrontation escalated into a duel. Although Cervin emerged victorious, he chose to show mercy, leaving Vonir with a crippling leg wound. Despite not delivering the final blow, this injury ultimately led to Vonir's demise at the hands of a pack of werewolves in 1292.

### The End of the Hansa (August's alleged death)

The final blow to the Hansa of Ebbing would occur in the year 1311, twenty years after the death of Coshunee, and thirty-six years after August had joined Brianna and Cervin, giving rise to the already legendary group by then. This event would be the notification from the few Ammurun present in Nordling/Nilfgaardian lands (that is, those exiled, meaning August's family) of a civil war in the lands of these distant vampires. The conflict, in summary, began (as reported by the contacts between the future Nordling colonizers of the Western Continent and the Ammurun) when a vampire named Usalul attempted something akin to a coup in human terms, to overthrow the Unseen Elder of the Ammurun, which failed. However, because Usalul was quite popular among a part of those vampires, although the coup failed, it sparked a civil war between those who wanted to overthrow the Unseen Elder and put Usalul in his position, and those who defended the Unseen Elder.

August, convinced by his mother that perhaps supporting Usalul could lead to their forgiveness and a return to their old home, as well as changing things and improving their vampiric culture, marched off to fight. Eventually, he apparently perished far from his beloved. This deeply saddened Brianna, who could sense his loss, ultimately pushing her into the long and deep depression she would experience because, it is rumored, when she and August married, they had made a blood pact using vampiric magic (something common in vampire weddings but rare between vampires and other races), which in a way, gave them a profound connection in more than one sense. After August's alleged death, Lady Katrina, August's mother, notified Brianna that her son was unaccounted for, and the vampire's title passed to the sorceress by right of marriage. This news further saddened the sorceress, ushering the legendary Great Demon Age in Ebbing.

After August's death, the remnants of the Hansa, Cervin and Brianna, along with some members like Runa, relocated to an abandoned village near the Van Der Ermius castle in Neveugen. Over time, they restored the village, and during this period, Brianna began to withdraw more and more from the outside world, becoming increasingly isolated. This restoration and gradual seclusion eventually culminated in the establishment of the so-called Garden Tower after the events of 1350 who used the structure of the village in its foundation.

Between 1311 and 1350, Brianna met Aramis, a former follower of August whom the vampire had entrusted with taking care of the castle's upkeep should anything happen to him. When Brianna explained what had occurred, Aramis embarked on a quest to find any clue that might lead him to August. After a period of approximately 47 or 8 years (the exact duration is unclear), August "came back to life" when Aramis employed a similar process to what Regis underwent with Dettlaff.

### Second Brianna's suicide attempt (1313)

Brianna's second suicide attempt occurred in the year 1313, two years after August's disappearance and presumed death. Consumed by immense pain and emptiness, Brianna tried to get herself arrested and sentenced to death by committing several crimes of blasphemy, sacrilege against various religions as well as theft. She succeeded after some time. Fortunately for Brianna, her sister, Queen Thessa, aged 54, was still alive, and using her influence, she managed to prevent Brianna from being hanged. However, in exchange, Brianna was sent to an asylum in the capital for a while.

Nevertheless, the asylum in Ebbing capital where she was taken had become a [Cursed Asylum](#), and Cervin, along with Runa, eventually had to take care of purifying it. This resulted in Brianna's stay in the asylum being very brief.

### The Haaki / Kilanti Invasion (1349 / 1350)

*"We cannot win a war with brute force alone. We need cunning, strategy, and a united front. Only then can we repel this chaos."*

—Brianna to the kings of the Northern Kingdoms prior to the creation of the Northern Front

As previously mentioned, Brianna became one of the key figures in the Haaki Invasion, also known as the Kilanti or Haakgian Invasion in other written sources, which was prophesied by the elven oracle Ithlinne with great accuracy long ago. The invasion began in September 1349, extending to northern territories in 1350 and ending in September of that year with the defeat of the invaders. It is believed that Brianna herself could have been foretold by the oracle, as apocryphal versions of the Haaki Invasion prophecy mention that "The fire without vigor shall lead the defense; only with new firewood shall the invader be turned away," a reference in the first line that many believe describes Brianna's emotional state and her red hair.

The invasion commenced when the invaders crossed the Fiery Mountains and reached Tir Tochair, where they prepared after subduing the [gnomes](#) and using them for the manufacturing of weapons and equipment. The last books containing the way to manufacture the legendary gnomish swords long time without production, gwyhyr, were believed to be lost after the defeat and exploitation of the gnomes. It wouldn't be until they acquired this great equipment that the invaders, divided into two large hordes (the red and the black) with a sub-horde, the golden, where the invasion leader, the Great Khan Zeus, and his closest associates and best warriors were, finally launched their attack against some Nilfgaardian provinces and vassal states before reaching the north in early 1350, emboldened by their victories.

They traversed Gheso and Maecht, continuing to Ebbing, where the local forces could not muster much defense as imperial aid reacted late to the surprise

invasion. They were forced to flee, with many marching north under Brianna's leadership, who had managed to prevent massive desertions in the few remaining forces thanks to her exemplary attitude in the unfortunately failed defense of the kingdom. After Ebbing, they continued to Metinna, where their victory allowed them to improve their cavalry forces with the local horses of the region. They then proceeded to Nazair and completely razed Cintra, with their army surviving more or less intact compared to that of Ebbing or Metinna, before crossing the Yaruga and penetrating into Temeria in the spring of 1350, specifically on March 17th, when they reached Brugge, where they encountered strong resistance led by King Yam IV of Temeria, who had been receiving refugees from the south and preparing in case the invaders were not stopped.

The battle was bloody and extensive, but ultimately, the invaders managed to win due to their superior numbers and armament. Brugge was completely destroyed, and Yam IV died in the battle, officially marking the beginning of the invasion in the Northern Realms according to historiography. After Yam and the Temerian forces' defeat, there was a challenging six-month period due to poor strategies and lack of unity, allowing the Haaki forces to easily crush the invaded Nordlings with their two main hordes and, to a lesser extent, the golden sub-horde. Brianna participated in many of these battles alongside Cervin (and it is said also Runa).

It wasn't until Brianna, along with Anika and other mages during the Council of Daevon, convinced the Northern kings to stop blaming each other for not stopping the invaders, accept collaboration with the Nilfgaardian army from Cintra (and the rest from the forces from the other vassal kingdoms and provinces of the empire that had been affected), and unite into a single army with what remained of their forces halfway through the year-long invasion, creating what was later called, the Northern Front, that things would change in their favor. They attempted to negotiate peace with the Great Khan Zeus through the famous witcher, Putnam Pitch, who knew the Great Khan personally, having saved his life during Fabio Sachs' Expedition to the Far East (1282-1285). However, recruiting Putnam was difficult due to his location at the time, and the kings' reluctance to let a "mutant" speak on their behalf. Thus, Anika and other mages were sent to search for surviving members of the Far East expedition who were not, in their words, "a fucking mutant." Unfortunately, they found no one alive, as people like Istredd or Eberhatt had been dead for several years, literally on the other side of the world. In the end, the kings had to yield and accept that Putnam would attempt the diplomatic approach. The peace negotiations failed. However, the unity of the armies and the time gained with the negotiations allowed the Northern Front to experience a fluctuating series of minor victories. These triumphs played a pivotal role in boosting soldiers' morale and refining their organizational capabilities. Gradually, they adapted to the enemy's tactics, though they remained in a precarious position. To this, we must add that Putnam would join the forces as another soldier, something that, along with the mages' feat, would have some importance.

A critical element contributing to these victories was the intervention of pirates hailing from the Skellige Islands. These seafarers thwarted the Haakis' attempts to take to the open waters for their conquest endeavors. Consequently, the Haakis found themselves increasingly confined to land, providing an opportunity for the Northern Front to launch surprise attacks utilizing the region's intricate network of navigable rivers with the pirates' help. This strategy turned the tables on the Haakis, subjecting them to unexpected assaults and further complicating their situation.

What eventually would lead to the Northern Front's victory was an idea conceived by the Witcher Grandmaster of the [School of the Fox, Adalwulf of Aedirn](#), another key figure in the invasion, luring the Haaki forces to a single point and defeating them there. They faced danger, yes, and they didn't have the advantage, not only in numbers but also in equipment. However, it could work if the terrain was right, and there was no better place for it than the mountainous region of Mahakam. To

execute this plan, they had to convince the dwarves, but it posed no problem as they too had been affected by what they called the "easterners" and wanted to give them what they deserved. The dwarves joined the Northern Front, giving rise to the Second Mahakam Volunteer Army as part of the forces. This move proved crucial in not only replenishing their losses in terms of manpower but also equipment, as the dwarves made all their resources available to the united Nordling and Nilfgaard or Nilfgaard-allied armies. One of the members of the Second Mahakam Volunteer Army, Roth, a friend of Putnam, would stand above the rest.

This set the stage for what would later be known in history as the [Battle of Mahakam](#), which ended with a Nordling victory and the expulsion of the Haakis from the Northern Realms after a year of invasion (counting since 1349, as places like Ebbing were de jure independent). It's worth noting that the dwarves' contribution to the expulsion of the Haakis was so significant that it left a lasting impact on Nordling history. This finally put an end to years of discrimination against dwarves, elevating them from second-class citizens to full-fledged citizens alongside humans. This represented a significant advancement in the Nordling mindset. This shift in attitudes would prove pivotal for subsequent events, such as the colonization of the [Silk Islands](#) and the [Western Continent](#) by the Nordlings, in which the dwarves played a crucial role.

The final battle against the Haakis in Mahakam, occurred, to be precise, in mid-September. By this time, the Northern Front, as previously mentioned, had bolstered its strength significantly compared to the earlier part of the year. They were determined to take the daring gamble of luring all the Haaki troops to the region to eliminate them once and for all. Although the risks had been minimized thanks to the strategically chosen terrain and the invaluable assistance of the dwarves, there was still an underlying sense of danger. The battle was grueling but undoubtedly worthy of being retold by bards in the years to come. In this case, it evoked the saying from Toussaint: "a battle of Geralt against Golyat." However, in this instance, Geralt was battling with half his strength, having only partially recovered from his injuries, but he was better prepared for the next round of combat.

From this battle, many heroes emerged, including the one who conceived the audacious plan to lure the Haakis there, Adalwulf, along with Brianna Anika (accompanied by other mages), and unexpected individuals like the already mentioned Roth, Putnam, and Cervin. Among these heroic figures, Anika and the mages distinguished themselves by accomplishing a feat that might even rival the achievements of the heroes of Sodden, both those who had perished and those who survived later on. This remarkable feat involved the partial control of an [ifrit](#), a fire genie, and the most dangerous of them, a resource that Anika had obtained through a dwarf merchant who had acquired the genie before the invasion. This control of the ifrit played a pivotal role in weakening the invading Haaki troops, contributing significantly to their ultimate defeat.

The first part of it involved offering the Haakis a bait, making them believe that Mahakam was empty and ripe for plunder, much like luring a mouse into a trap with a piece of cheese. They let the Haakis become overconfident while positioning themselves in one of the narrow passages within the vassal state of Temeria, waiting to catch them off guard when they eventually passed through. This strategy prevented the Haakis from maneuvering in open terrain, which was a significant advantage for them due to the plains and hills in their homeland. Interestingly, although it was later referred to as the Battle of Mahakam, it was not because it occurred in the dwarf state but because it took place in the pass of the same name.

In the second phase, as you can imagine, the plan involved releasing the Ifrit and attempting to control it so that it would exclusively target the Haaki troops. However, a significant challenge arose due to the narrow terrain, making this task

exceedingly difficult, if not virtually impossible. This is where Roth's act of bravery or recklessness (depending on one's perspective) came into play.

The initial strategy was to initiate the battle, gradually compel the Haakis to retreat, and then, just as they were about to exit the pass, release the Ifrit to unleash devastation upon the enemy forces. However, the red-haired dwarf had different ideas. He expedited the process to prevent the battle from taking a turn for the worse, setting a rapid pace and demoralizing the Haakis in the process.

As the battle teetered on the brink of commencing, with the two armies facing each other, Roth, boldly defied his superiors' orders and, without a moment's hesitation, threw himself into the fray. This indirectly compelled Putnam, who was on the front lines, to follow suit. Like other witchers who had joined the Northern Front, Putnam had been assigned to a specific army for enhancement. On this particular day, he found himself on the front line of attack/defense alongside the dwarves. Putnam joined Roth in the thick of the battle, attempting to save him, and they fought side by side.

This unexpected and daring action proved to be a powerful source of inspiration for the Northern Front troops as they witnessed that neither the dwarf, nor the witcher had perished, contrary to the initial fears of many, and they observed them not only defending themselves but also defeating several Haakis. This struck terror into the hearts of the enemy, who couldn't fathom why their adversaries remained unbroken.

This pivotal moment prompted the entire Northern Front armies to fully engage in the battle, advancing faster than the original plan mentioned earlier. This allowed Anika and the other mages to release the Ifrit and partially control it briefly, as they noticed the Haaki troops fleeing from the pass and the armies of the Northern Front retreating far enough to avoid significant harm. Some mages fell in the process of controlling the Ifrit, but their sacrifice was not in vain. The genie enabled the elimination of more troops from the various Haaki hordes and instilled more terror in the Haakis, causing the hordes to disperse into different smaller groups.

This paved the way for the third part of the plan, which, thanks to the motivation the soldiers received from Roth and Putnam, was executed flawlessly. The objective was to hunt down the various groups of Haaki troops that had scattered throughout Mahakam, which was achieved, with many Haakis fleeing after the battle.

Amidst this chaos, Brianna, surviving and still recovering from her ordeal controlling the Ifrit along the mages, confronted Zeus in an abandoned open-sky mine that was later renamed "The Scarlett Pit" by the dwarves in Brianna's honor. Drawing upon the demon-god's power momentarily, she engaged in a fierce battle that culminated in the defeat of Zeus (this was seen as the beginning of Brianna's corruption by many according to later stories of the mage) With his demise, the invasion was officially ended, and the Northern Kingdoms, along with the affected parts of Nilfgaard, managed to maintain their independence. This eventually fostered along peace, that prevented another conflict between the North and the Empire.

And Brianna, like other heroes of the invasion, eventually was bestowed with a title. In her case, like a Anika was the title of "Lady of The North". The only exception was Cervin, who exchanged his title for permissions of the Ebinger Crown for Brianna to construct the already mentioned Garden Tower.

## Late years prior to her disappearance (The Great Demon Age in Ebbing) [1350 - 1358]

Supposedly, after the invasion, Brianna's story came to an end during this period, with multiple versions and theories on how it ended. However, the most popular

version says that after decades, Brianna found herself alone in the world. Queen Thessa had died of old age in her bed, Wildson had passed away in her grandparents' vineyard, and her nephews had ascended to kingship, followed by their sons and their sons' sons. Despite Brianna continuing to watch over her lineage, Vassermiller realized that everything had changed, and she was now simply "Brianna." Moreover, she bore the mental scars left by the Haaki Invasion and suffered from deep depression, as mentioned earlier.

As time passed, Brianna's use of haemokinesis corrupted her to the point where Yrrheded, seeing an opportunity with the almost complete end of the Nefandi and Brianna's corruption, sought to return to the world on his own terms. Brianna, attempting to halt Yrrheded's uncontrollable actions and driven by boundless grief, made multiple suicide attempts. On one unremarkable day, burdened by the loss of too many loved ones along the way, Brianna decided to end her life. This act was also a means for Brianna to cease the unusual manifestations that Cervin sporadically reported to her, which were happening in Ebbing, likely signs of the demon god's return to the world.

Returning to August's castle, Brianna believed she saw the ghost of her husband and allowed herself to succumb, thinking she was joining him in eternity. However, her severe depression had deluded her into believing that all her loved ones had returned from the dead to accompany her. In truth, only her body had entered a state of "hibernation" to recover strength. For years, Runa and Cervin cared for Brianna's sleeping body until, in 1356, she finally awoke.

Resuming her life in the countryside with Cervin and Runa, along with her ladies Lanwe and Clarabelle, whom she had employed to aid her with the tower since its construction in 1350, Brianna continued for a while. The Great Demon Age concluded the moment Aramis and August returned to the Garden Tower.

## Disappearance (1358)

*"Brianna believed in the good, even after all she'd seen. I owe it to her to hold onto that sliver of hope, no matter how small."*

—Cervin's alleged words to Runa after Brianna's disappearance

For unknown reasons and motives, by 1358, with the arrival of the Second Conjunction of Spheres, Brianna, like the other remaining active member of the Hansa, disappeared from the public eye. Little by little, along with the deceased members and the passing of decades, they would become the legends they were later known as. Of Cervin, at least one possible report in 1373 is known, saving a young girl from a [idr](#). But of Brianna, absolutely nothing is known, leading to speculations, rumors, theories, etc., and multiple endings to her legend.

Some say that she died of sorrow in her tower eventually due to August's absence despite Cervin's attempts to lift her spirits. Others say that in 1380, with the beginning of the colonization of the Western Continent, she marched there in search of a change of scenery and a new life. Still, others say that she actually died when she was completely possessed by the god-demon she had locked inside her, and that Cervin, along with Runa, tried to stop the god-demon from carrying out terrible plans in the world dying in the process as well with her.

However, others speculate a less legendary but more plausible ending. It is said that Brianna, taking advantage of the Second Conjunction of Spheres, left her world with August and went to another, where she would eventually form a family, and both would have a dhampir daughter named Sylthana. This last speculation is based on supposed reports of such a [dhampir](#) daughter in the world, although the reasons of her being in the world are unknown. The actual ending of Brianna's life in that other world, like that of the famous White Wolf and his sorceress, remains unknown and open to interpretation.

## Physical appearance



At a height of 5 feet and 7 inches, Brianna possessed pale skin, ginger hair, and greyish-green eyes. Her face still somewhat child-like, with defined cheekbones and a square, slightly rounded shape. She had thin, pink lips, a flattened nose with a slightly upturned tip, and distinct moles on her face, reminiscent of those of her grandmother. Her collarbones were not prominent due to her physique, with wide thighs, a narrow waist, ample chest, and an hourglass figure. Her hands were slender with long fingers, adorned with almond-shaped nails.

Due to the different treatment that mages received in Nilfgaard, especially at the academy she attended, Loc Grim, Brianna contrasted physically with the typical image that a Nordling, Oferi, or Zerrikanian, among others, might have of a sorceress. In that sense, she was quite different, much like the famous [Isbel aep Muir Moss](#) during the [Second Northern War](#), although unlike Isbel, she did undergo the usual [anti-aging treatment](#). She was beautiful, but within the beauty standards prevalent in the [Lower Alba](#) region, where women with a curvier and red-haired appearance were considered attractive (this last one was something relatively rare to see in the imperial capital). This was in contrast to the Northern Realms, where more emphasis was placed on the "perfect" bodies of sorceresses. In Nilfgaard, these curvier bodies were considered "blessed by the [Great Sun](#)," a sign of fertility, abundance, etc.

Her natural beauty, in fact, allowed her to make some key contacts by attracting attention at the academy. It would only be after completing her studies that she made some subtle adjustments using magical surgery, with the intention of catching the eye of potential Nordling diplomats when they came to Ebbing, making it easier to persuade them.

## Personality and traits



*"I would rather wear the scars of a helping hand than the callouses of indifference."*

—Brianna

Brianna's personality could be described in general terms as determined and stubborn, with clear goals that she pursued with tenacity. Like water, she often maintained an apparent calmness, but when circumstances required it, she could unleash impressive chaos. Her philosophy and spirituality were rooted in the concept of Order, although she did not reach fanatical extremes like those present in the Eternal Fire. However, she internally struggled with the dichotomy of actively intervening to impose changes or allowing the natural flow of things to take its course, respecting the autonomy of others.

Curiosity was one of Brianna's fundamental characteristics, always eager to acquire knowledge and grow intellectually, with the conviction that wisdom was the path to improving the world, especially her kingdom, Ebbing, which was why she became a sorceress. Despite her unwavering determination, her loyalty to her family, especially to her own siblings (biological or not), was undeniable. Although time and her longevity as a sorceress gradually distanced her from her indirect descendants who continued to rule Ebbing, she had found a new family in the Hansa of Ebbing, to which she dedicated most of her devotion and maternal care.

In addition to her determination and loyalty, Brianna possessed a generous and compassionate heart, always willing to help those in need, even at the expense of her own well-being. However, this same generosity could lead her to be manipulated or taken advantage of by others, revealing an underlying vulnerability. Despite her efforts to stay firm in her convictions, Brianna was also prone to doubt and self-questioning, especially when it came to decisions that affected those she loved.

The tragedies of the past, particularly those derived from her relationship with the Great Khan of Kilan-Tal, Zeus, had left deep emotional scars on Brianna, sowing seeds of insecurity when forming bonds with others. Her altruistic and pure nature led her to offer help quickly and selflessly, making her vulnerable to manipulation and deceit. However, she also harbored a darkness within her, a facet that only a few individuals had the opportunity to glimpse, fearful that it might cause harm to those around her if unleashed.

She was also fond of singing from time to time; it was one of her hobbies, as well as playing Gwent with the Ebbing faction when it was added to the game around the year 1282, along with the Ofieri faction. She was also very fond of cats, art in general, and cherries. She was known for being a patron of many artists in Ebbing, and many paintings were preserved thanks to her.

She didn't like rats (in more ways than one), strong smells, and strong sounds, criticizing the sorceresses who used their perfume to leave a mark on people or glamarye to enhance their beauty to the extreme, believing such practices were superficial and distracted from true power. She valued inner beauty and strength cultivated through knowledge and experience. While she understood the allure of such enhancements, she worried they fostered vanity and arrogance, traits she actively discouraged. This philosophy extended to her own appearance. While always impeccably groomed, Brianna eschewed ostentatious displays of wealth or beauty, preferring to project an aura of quiet power and understated elegance.

Her perfume was citrus with ahazar and roses. However, certain races and foreigners said that the sorceress smelled of black tea with lemon; the origin of Brianna's change in scent is unknown, but it is believed that Brianna made her perfume differently from other sorceresses.

Brianna usually wore reds and maroons, sometimes even wine-colored, although the color that suited her best was blue, a color that mirrored the depths of her personality. The red and maroon shades she often donned reflected her inner fire, the wellspring of power she kept hidden. But there was a vulnerability to these fiery hues, a rawness that mirrored the emotional scars she carried. Blue, on the other hand, spoke to the calmness she projected, the serenity she strived for. It hinted at the wisdom she sought, the order she craved for the world. This duality – fire and ice, passion and tranquility – was another facet of Brianna's complexity. The color she chose to wear usually offered a glimpse into her mood.

Prior to her disappearance from [The Continent](#), Brianna never considered the option of having children, fearing that her power and the darkness she harbored might endanger any offspring. The Hansa, the surrogate family she found, as already mentioned, filled the void of parenthood for a time. However, as she grew older, she changed her mind, and if we are to believe the rumors and legends, Brianna would eventually end up having children with her partner, August. This resulted in the aforementioned dhampir, Sylthana, when she overcame a strong and long depression derived from the apparent death of August and the loss of different members of the Hansa over the years, such as Aête and Coshunee.

Brianna, depressed, could be described as melancholic, as well, empty, adrift and with a lot of apathy. Searching for new experiences that would make her feel alive again, with resulted in part (not all) of the already mentioned suicide attempts as well fleeting romances such as the rumored one with the Scoia'tael Aen Seidhe elf, Saov. These romances, however, provided only temporary relief. The hollowness remained, a constant reminder of the losses she had suffered.

As a curious fact, like a certain sorceress of Maribor, Brianna was also allergic, although in her case, to fish, which gave her blisters.



- Brianna Vassermiller by Siccada\_Art

## Notes

- The story of Juan Pablo Vassermiller in Brianna's article deviates from what is presented in The Witcher 1, where Juan Pablo appears, for the simple reason that it makes more sense for him to have perished in the insurrection than to still be alive in 1271, since Ebbing could have sent any other representative of the same relevance to the banquet.

## Trivia

- **Artes prohibita**e was a real book written by Johannes Hartlieb in 1456.
- The reference to Emhyr's decision seeks to combine the canonical ending of The Witcher 3, i.e. the one on which the Gwent Iron Judgment expansion bases its story, with one of the possible endings for Emhyr in TW3, in which he is killed by his court, mixed with the canonical ending he has in the books, in which he dies in the year 1290.
- The hawmins are a reference to the havlins from the webcomic *Alfie* by InCaseArt, which, in turn, are a nod to halflings or hobbits from D&D and LOTR. The hawmins, in this case, would be the result of a mix between gnomes and elves or gnomes and half-elves. The idea of including them has not only been as an Easter egg or homage but also because, although not confirmed, the possibility of half-gnomes exists in The Witcher. They are also, a reference to the svergs who appeared in the Hussite Trilogy by Andrzej Sapkowski.

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